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Studies in Female Leadership in Pakistan: Benazir Bhutto as Prime Minister of Pakistan (1988-90)

Abstract

Charismatic leadership emerges as a response to the political challenges. The life history of Benazir Bhutto also falls under the category of charismatic leadership as she displayed exceptional leadership qualities in the face of different personal and political challenges. In a predominantly patriarchal Pakistani society, she was confronted with the biggest of challenges of creating a space for female leadership. Therefore, this article is an attempt to explore, investigate and analyze the numerous socio-economic, political and geo-strategic challenges and responses of Benazir Bhutto as the Prime Minister of Pakistan (1988-90) to understand her leadership qualities which she displayed while she was in the office of Prime Minister. Moreover, different theories have also been applied to have a better understanding of Benazir Bhutto's leadership qualities and administrative abilities. Furthermore, it encapsulates the civil-military relationship during the occasion of her first premiership 1988-90. This study also throws light on dwindling economy, the perpetuation of vindictive politics by the opposition and conflicting relations with President Ghulam Ishaq created a grave challenge not only for poor governance but also for the longevity of her premiership tenure. It was not smooth sailing for her as Prime Minister; however, it was a journey full of myriad challenges; inherited dwindling economy, volatile geo-political situation, overdeveloped state structure, a strife-torn society and high expectations of the people who had experienced almost a decade long political suppression under military dictatorship. Regional disparities, vindictive politics of opposition and imbalance of power between the President as well as Prime Minister required stupendous efforts from Benazir Bhutto as a Prime Minister. Furthermore, endemic unemployment, rampant poverty, illiteracy, economic bankruptcy were the other major socio-economic challenges. Moreover, constitutionally, her government did not possess a majority in the National Assembly to undo looming danger of the President's prerogatives to pack elected Assemblies for home; under the provisions of 58 (2) (B) in Pakistan constitution. The arbitrary use of the Presidential power of 58 (2B) was completely unjustified. Moreover, to join the Prime Minister's office, even, the Army nod was not only indispensable but also, she had to develop the relationship of confidence, trust and understanding with the military. It is important to revisit the major socio-economic, political and geopolitical issues when Benazir Bhutto assumed power to assess fairly her governance and overall performance as Prime Minister of Pakistan during (1988-90). Therefore, in this study, the author tries to find answers to the following: Whether it was her corruption, nepotism and bad governance which led to her downfall or the misconceptions and bad civil-military relations were responsible for her dismissal?

Keywords: Benazir, Female Leadership, Pakistan, Prime Minister

Civil-Military Relationship

In 1988, the Pakistan Peoples' Party majority raised an eye-brow in military leadership because the perception of Pakistan Peoples' Party, in the eyes of the military, was anti-army and the party's leadership used to be considered as conspired against military elites.[1] Barrister Ch. Aitzaz Ahsan, Minister of Interior, Law and Justice during Benazir Bhutto's first Premiership (1988-90) revealed in an interview by the researcher that the military

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regime of Gen. Zia-ul-Haq ruled more than a decade long, therefore, after the death of Gen. Zia, the military entrenchment in politics was still prevailing at that time. The mutual distrust and hostility existed between Benazir Bhutto and military elites at that time.[2] However, the departure of Gen. Zia from the corridor of power, the achievement of majority by PPP in 1988 general elections, required a situational attitude transformation from political as well as military leadership. Therefore, Benazir Bhutto not only demonstrated bargaining chip to become Prime Minister but she also accepted military's demands; to retain Sahibzada Yaqoob Khan as Foreign Minister, not to cut the defense budget, and let to continue Gen. Aslam Beg as an Army Chief.[3] The primary administrative challenge of Benazir Bhutto was to develop understanding, trust as well as cooperation with the military.[4] On flipside of the coin, military, initially, was reluctant, to some extent, was willing to develop a better relationship with civilian leadership.[5] At that juncture, civilian leadership and military elites demonstrated; caution and suspicion towards each other, by and large, started the era of civil-military understanding.[6] In this political challenge, Benazir Bhutto coined the bargaining chip, reasonably well, to the challenge of civil-military relationship.[7]

Even, in the office of Prime Minister, despite initial understanding, she kept on creating more challenges for herself and antagonized the military by taking various steps during her first tenure. On 24th May 1989, Benazir Bhutto replaced Gen. Hameed Gul, Head of ISI, chief strategist during Afghan War as well as creator of IJI with Lt. Gen. Shams-ur-Rehman Kallu, who was a retired military officer. Instead of making an appointment from serving officers, she appointed a retired General as ISI Chief without consultation of Army Chief.[8] However, this action of Benazir was not appreciated by the military.

Moreover, another challenge which Benazir Bhutto faced related to misunderstanding with the military was the incident of *Pacca Qilla* (an old settlement of *Hyderabad*, Sindh, predominantly its inhabitants were *Muhajirs* (Migrants). The Sindh government was reported that a large cache of various categories of weapons concealed by the MQM militant group, therefore, the provincial authorities carried out an operation Clean-Up.[9] This operation led towards strong riots in Karachi by the *Muhajir* community and reaction caused by *Muhajirs* killed almost 350 persons. The timings of the operation were chosen when the top brass of military was not present.[10] At that juncture, the army troops moved in and took the control of the area and commanded the Police authorities to clear out with immediate effect.[11] This incident of *Pacca Qilla* parted ways between Army Chief as well as Prime Minister.[12] Even, Army Chief and Prime Minister did not meet between 27th of May till 24th of July 1990.[13] This incident also created problems for Benazir Bhutto and she could not handle the relationship with military tactfully and misunderstanding with top military brass weakened her grip in the administrative affairs of the country.[14]

Even, Benazir's differences regarding Army Selection Board related to promotions, postings and retirements of senior rank officers; were also arisen towards confrontation.[15] Benazir Bhutto, being the Prime Minister tried to interfere in Military's Selection Board to seek, extension in term of appointment, of Lt. Gen. Aslam Masood who was serving as Corps Commander, Lahore.[16] At that juncture, the military leadership conveyed serious concerns to the President and became doubtful about Benazir's commitment regarding power-sharing with military. In July, 1990, the generals in the Corps Commander meeting conveyed a decisive message to the President of Pakistan that supremacy of civilian government will no longer be accepted by military commanders. As a result, the President, Ghulam Ishaq Khan added military's message to his already long list of charges; like corruption, misconduct, nepotism and inefficiency of PPP government and decided to overthrow the government of Benazir Bhutto.[17]

Dwindling Economy

Eric Allen Nordlinger, a well known Political Scientist opines that the civilian government, before assuming power, makes promises with the public regarding the fulfillment of fundamental needs of the people. However, in dwindling economic circumstances, it is very difficult to fulfill promises and to ensure the provision of basic needs for any government in initial months. Even, it is observed, in the Martial Law regime, mostly, the overall growth rate slows down because of financial deficient, foreign loans and less trade activities. This situation becomes troublesome when civilian government came into power.[18] Before the arrival of Benazir Bhutto as Prime Minister in 1988, a decade long military regime under Gen. Zia was more focused towards Afghan War and foreign aid rather than concentrating on exports and product-based economy.[19] During election campaign of 1988, PPP leadership made ambitious promises regarding; elimination of poverty, unemployment and provision of medical facilities etc. Economically, PPP has to justify those rhetoric promises; however, budget deficit, poor growth rate

and low per capita income were inherited by the Benazir government during her first tenure.[20] The foreign debt reached almost to 12.5 million dollars. Besides this, the internal debt was also touching Rs. 272 billion by March 1988. In these circumstances, the flood of 1988, in Pakistan, catalyzed the already problematic and dwindling economic situation. Therefore, agriculture growth rate was also decreased. When Benazir took power as Prime Minister, in 1988, the economic growth rate, GNP, the agricultural sector was facing difficulties and required visionary planning to put the country's economy on the track of growth.[21]

Even, the caretaker government signed an agreement with the IMF, which created problems for Benazir Bhutto's government and decreased PPP's government popularity. Although the IMF pledged nearly 1.3 billion, to be provided to the Pakistan government, in the next 3 years, yet, certain conditions associated with this agreement, by the IMF, created hurdles for the PPP government. Under the agreement with IMF, Benazir Bhutto's government had to restrain growth of domestic credit, to minimize budget deficit by reducing subsidies and to impose higher tax rates directly or indirectly. At that time, the government could reduce the budget deficit while cutting extra expenditure and to raise the level of revenue collection. Furthermore, Adekanye (a well-known Nigerian Political Scientist) remarked, in the post military states, inflation, unemployment and economic recession is always a common phenomenon which threatens the standard of life and stability of civilian rule.[22]

Benazir Bhutto, during her first tenure, also faced the same kind of problems economically. It was very difficult for her to cut defense budget because she has committed with the military not to do so. Similarly, if she would have taken steps to reduce subsidies on food items, it could enhance social unrest and it could minimize the popularity of her government. Further, if her government minimized development expenditure, it could also jeopardize the popularity of the PPP government. Even for her government, it was very difficult to increase the level of tax collection; because the country's economy was agrarian-based and feudals are dominating in the Parliament. Therefore, tax collection was also a difficult proposition to increase the revenue. Akmal Hussain, a famous economist of Pakistan wrote that; charisma in Benazir's personality is inherited by her father's personality and political skills. However, if she will not deliver in the office of Prime Minister, her charisma will be provided as fragile and it will be eroded. Therefore, she had to deliver for the amelioration of the plight of the poor, to improve the economy and to stabilize GNP. It was very difficult for her government to deliver public service programs; to provide drinking water to 64 million, houses to 20 million homeless, education as well as nutrition to the 40% chunk of population; who faced minimum calorie intake deficiencies. On the other hand, the country was facing financial restraints, less revenue collection and non-availability of development funds.[23]

Vindictive Politics of Opposition

Benazir, in her first tenure of premiership, faced a very tough opposition as Islamic Jamhoori Ittehad (IJI) led by Nawaz Sharif created many hurdles and challenges. In Centre, Benazir Bhutto was facing rift as well as resistance from Nawaz Sharif, Chief Minister of Punjab who used to claim to form his government and always was willing to overthrow her government.[24] From, the formation of government by Benazir Bhutto, the political battle between Islamic Jamhoori Ittehad and Pakistan Peoples' Party remained active. In this competition, both the PPP and IJI left no stone unturned to defame each other.[25] At that juncture, Nawaz Sharif became the strongest advocate of provincial autonomy; he used to talk in different T.V programs regarding the establishment of separate Provincial Bank, T.V Station as well as an energy-providing institution should be allowed to provinces.[26] Barrister Aitzaz Ahsan, Interior Minister of Benazir Bhutto's first Government (1988-90) during an interview by the researcher revealed that the then President Ghulam Ishaq Khan was behind the opposition actions to destabilize Benazir Bhutto's government.[27]

Further, different political parties, which supported Benazir Bhutto in the struggle against the military regime for revival of democracy in the country, now backed the opposition against the Benazir's government at the Centre. MQM, initially, supported Benazir Bhutto to form government at the Centre, later on, joined hands with the IJI. In NWFP (now Khyber-Pakhtunkhawa) province, PPP established a coalition government with Awami National Party (ANP) which also ended because of not appointing the ANP nominated Governor of NWFP. Even, during the motion for no-confidence floated by opposition compelled the government to utilize all resources at its disposal, to defeat the opposition. The government with the help of some independents and tribal area's members defeated the no-confidence move floated by opposition; however, the opposition always remained tricky during the entire tenure of Benazir Bhutto.[28]

Imbalance of Powers between Prime Minister and President

During her first tenure (1988-90), the relations of Benazir Bhutto with Ghulam Ishaq Khan, the then President were prickly and tense due to imbalance of powers between Prime Minister and President at that time. Constitutionally, her government did not possess majority in National Assembly to undo looming danger of President prerogatives to pack elected Assemblies for home; under the provision of 58 (2) (B) in Pakistan constitution.[29] Benazir Bhutto, during her election campaign in 1988, showed her intention in party manifesto, to repeal the 8th constitutional amendment that provides to President; the power for dissolving National Assembly as well as to dismiss Prime Minister. However, after assuming the power as a Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto discussed the matter for repealing 8th amendment with opposition parties. However, they did not respond positively.

Constitutionally, there arose a rift between Prime Minister and President about the right of article 243 (c) which provided discretion, either to President or Prime Minister for appointing Chairman, Joint Chief of Staff Committee. Benazir Bhutto referred; to assert her authority, to the executive order which was exercised by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1970s, to fix tenures of services chiefs and not by JCSC.[30] As per 8th amendment, powers were enjoyed by the President and she had to retreat from her stance. In these circumstances, the assertion of Benazir Bhutto's authority created suspicion regarding her intentions which antagonized the President. Therefore, this issue created a challenge for Benazir Bhutto's assertion in the administrative affairs of the country as a Prime Minister.[31] The challenge of her stormy relationship with Ghulam Ishaq proved a grave problem for her premiership. This mutual rivalry between President and Prime Minister was further galvanized when the issue of the judge's appointment emerged in the superior judiciary of Pakistan. Benazir thought that the President was bound to accept the advice of the Prime Minister regarding the appointment of judges. However, this controversy was persisting and it posed a huge challenge for Benazir Bhutto to fulfill its duration.[32]

Besides this, Benazir Bhutto also faced many challenges at the international level especially about foreign policy. At that time, Pakistan, as usual, was facing an upswing in volatility in its relations with India. The Kashmir dispute was also a challenge for her government to establish lasting peace and normalization of relations with India. Afghanistan, as always, was another problematic front in foreign relations. Pak-US relations, in the context of F-16 fighter aircraft's delivery issue and its pressure on Pakistan to roll back its atomic installation, also presented another dimension of problems and were a huge challenge for her government. She also confronted the challenge of Centre-Provinces relations, one of the country's oldest unresolved issues, with all the four provinces; Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and NWFP (Now KPK).

Benazir Bhutto's Response to Civil-Military Relations

In 1988, the elections brought PPP's victory which facilitated the way for Benazir Bhutto to associate, a hope of becoming Prime Minister of Pakistan. However, civilian political leadership and military bureaucracy were not enjoying a mutually deep and understanding based relationship.[33] Further, Civil and military leadership was suspicious, doubtful and on the brink of trust deficiency.[34] While responding to this political challenge, Benazir Bhutto floated the chip of compromises through the policy of give and take. Military was willing to carry on the Zia led Afghan Foreign Policy to keep strategic depth in North-Western frontier border of Pakistan. The response of Benazir Bhutto, initially, was compromising when she accepted the military's demands to retain Sahibzada Yaqoob as Foreign Minister of Pakistan, not to interfere in military's internal affairs and also to give direct role to the military in foreign policy etc.[35] Before taking the oath, for the office of Prime Minister, military affirmation and approval was important and Benazir responded with political dexterity and accommodative attitude as a sagacious politician. However, if Benazir would have been rejected the demands of military and her response was not positive to the military's demand; her arrival at the office of Prime Minister would have been jeopardized state of affairs.[36]

According to trait theory, leaders demonstrate their intelligence, temperament and attitude in different timings and duration. Therefore, Benazir's personality demonstrated a positive attitude and temperament while dealing political bargaining with the army; to smooth her way towards the office of Prime Minister of Pakistan. Therefore, trait theory is helpful to gauge the leadership qualities of Benazir with her accommodative attitude and good temperament.

Harmonizing Response regarding Gen. Aslam Beg's continuity as Army Chief

Benazir Bhutto also exhibited a harmonizing response to agree on the military's willingness regarding continuity of Aslam Beg as Army Chief in her first tenure of Premiership (1988-90). As a political leader, it was need of the time to accept the military's demand regarding the continuity of Gen. Aslam Beg as Army Chief.[37] Benazir Bhutto's positive response regarding the Army Chief, removed, to a larger extent, the misunderstanding and suspicions between top military brass and PPP's political leadership.

As behavioral theory describes that personality of the leader can be analyzed through his managerial activities, effectiveness and application of one's learning according to the demand of the profession. Therefore, Benazir Bhutto showed a good behavior towards Civil-Military relationship and was agreed regarding the continuity of Gen. Aslam Beg as an Army Chief. Therefore, behavioral theory is applied about the compromising and harmonizing behavior of Benazir Bhutto to handle the affairs with the state institutions with good behaviors and attitude.

Showing willingness Not to Cut the Defense Budget

The perception of Pakistan Peoples' Party, in the eyes of the military, was anti-army and the party's leadership used to be considered as conspired against military elites.[38] Therefore, the top military leadership was doubtful that the presence of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto as a Prime Minister will cut the defense budget of Pakistan. If Benazir Bhutto would have curtailed defense budget, it would have created many hurdles and problems for Pakistan military as well. The Indian aggressive designs, border skirmishes, volatile situation in Kashmir, always required Pakistan's defense system; to keep updated and modernized technologically. For this purpose, the military's insistence not to cut the defense budget was justified demand which received a positive response from Benazir Bhutto as well. Therefore, the military's perception of Benazir Bhutto as anti-army was removed.[39] The top military brass, through its demand, and Benazir's response of acceptance to military's demand was a significant attitudinal change; between military behavior and Benazir's acceptance as a women leader of the country. It was a sagacious reaction, on Benazir Bhutto's part, because historically the army had dominated politics in Pakistan. Benazir Bhutto's response to the initial challenges was a skillful demonstration, of a young leader, to hold the office of Prime Minister while tackling and managing the powerful forces in Pakistan political structure during her first tenure.[40] According to the situational theory, the leaders always performed well according to the situation by using their discretion, performance and authority. At the very outset of her journey, as the first female Prime Minister of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto showed her willingness, not to cut the defence budget, according to the situation as well as demand of the military. Thus, Benazir Bhutto acted according to the situation, agreed to the military's demand, ascended to the office of Prime Minister Pakistan, while showing leadership skills and presence of mind as the situation was demanding.

Compassionate Response and Morale Boosting Visit of Siachen Glacier

Benazir Bhutto gave an active response to the activities and contributions of soldiers who were facing difficulties and tribulations in harsh climatic conditions at Siachen glacier. For this purpose, on 21st August, Benazir Bhutto travelled to Skardu on Air Force C-130 Plane. It was a very supportive response on behalf of Benazir Bhutto; because no head of the state visited Siachen glacier before her. The visit of Benazir Bhutto on such high places with little availability of oxygen, proved a moral boosting visit and encouraged the morale of soldiers through her confident and compassionate response at Siachen glacier.[41]

Prioritizing the Education and other Development Projects

Benazir Bhutto during her first tenure, top priority was given to the education, power generation and rural development sectors. 60% allocation was increased in the education sector as compared to the previous allocation along with a big chunk reservation for the Primary education. Her government approved a special allocation of budget for the power generation and rural development. Benazir Bhutto also reduced the mark-up rate to 6 per cent in the budget which was related to finance for exploration of minerals, hotels; food processing and other smaller projects. The opposition was observing that, given dwindling financial condition of the country, the budget would be stringent; therefore, they planned to bring the public on road for protest against the government after the budget.[42] The first budget prepared by the caretaker setup was presented by Ehsanul Haq, the then Finance Minister in National Assembly on 4th December, 1988.[43] Benazir Bhutto's government succeeded to get a satisfactory response from the general public.

Establishment of Board of Investment, Placement Bureau, People's Work Program and Multinational Corporations

To consolidate financial power in her hands, Benazir Bhutto took the charge of Finance Minister. She established the Board of Investment for issuance of licenses to launch new industrial units and also made a cell in the Prime Minister Secretariat to oversee loans arranged by public sector development and commercial banks. She also created a Placement Bureau which was assigned the task for finding jobs for jobless people. Benazir Bhutto also rejuvenated People Work Program, which was introduced by Zia led regime and was given the task to provide funds for local councils to implement small developmental schemes.[44] In 1989, Benazir established many multinational corporations to open projects in connection with oil exploration, fruit preservation as well as textile industries. For instance, Cargill (United States) carried out a \$6.4 million investment to establish a juice plant near District Sargodha and also constructed a hybrid plant of seed at Lahore at a cost of 15 million dollars. These projects were 100% equity involvement in the United States. Hercules/Dawood, the Pak-US joint venture also expanded by investing \$325 million in urea fertilizer plant and in drilling, oil exploration, Occidental, Caltex and AMOCO also expanded the existing operations and made new investment.[45]

Introducing Economic Welfare Programs for Women

Benazir Bhutto's government presented its first-ever annual budget on 3rd June 1989. In this budget, her government extended various facilities like the establishment of First Women's Bank (FWB) to facilitate female gender that used to face difficulties while seeking banking facilities.[46] During her first tenure of Premiership (1988-90), Benazir Bhutto especially allocated the amount of 162.5 million for Ministry of Women Development in the budget of 1990. This was a courageous response towards amelioration of the plight of women; for their political participation. Her government exhibited democratic spirit and consulted various departments at the federal level as well as the provincial level and NGOs to seek the opinion and find ways for better implementations of women schemes; to ameliorate the female population of Pakistan. Her government responded to the problems faced by women in social departments like education, health, nutrition and provisions of different skills and trainings for income generation for women.[47] As a Prime Minister of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto learnt social conditions of female gender and tried to ameliorate the plight of women in Pakistan. The social learning theory focuses on response; after the acquisition of information regarding a particular task and then to show performance towards any environment, in any state. As a Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto perceived the miserable plight of women and tried to empower females with the aforementioned steps and measures.

Response to the Oppositional Politics

After assuming power during her first premiership (1988-90), Benazir Bhutto pledged to serve her nation and also focused to observe positive art of reforms, to steer the country towards progress and prosperity. Her response was optimistic when she expressed this idea in her first televised address speaking to the nation and remarked that nothing is difficult. Her administration took a fitting start with a punctuated meeting with IJI leader Nawaz Sharif. Benazir Bhutto demonstrated a commitment of understanding consensus-building, cooperation and accommodation. Her administration was also expecting a positive response from her political rivals. Benazir, during her first press briefing, demonstrated anger against Nawaz Sharif, and accused him as well as his IJI to steal the provincial elections.[48] During the elections of Nawaz Sharif as Chief Minister of Punjab, she directed the PPP stalwarts to vacate the provincial assembly of Punjab as a protest. Benazir Bhutto rejected the olive branch which was extended by IJI and supported her party Secretary-General for the appointment of Governor of Punjab. This act of Benazir was not a wise choice and she got unnecessarily involved in a political tug of war with her principal rival in the pivotal province of Pakistan in the early days of her tenure. Benazir Bhutto also imposed a retinue of Civil Servants of Federal government on the province without taking permission of provincial administration. Benazir Bhutto tried to manage the province from Islamabad. These tactics against opposition rivals based on her personal will and exploitation deteriorated the relations of Benazir Bhutto with opposition. Benazir Bhutto exhibited a mixed democratic experience through her actions and performances which was evident through her action towards Punjab. This was not a successful experience and outcome which, later on, brought far reaching impacts; unfolding various political splits in Benazir's personality. She used to claim of cosmopolitan experience and worldly exposure of democratic values while revealing restricted life ways and narrow approach towards political challenges and opposition rivalry.[49] Benazir Bhutto, instead of accepting the elections of 1988, was desirous enough to

control the Punjab province and was unaware of its full consequences. This desire of the Prime Minister to obsess with the province of the Punjab triggered a Presidential response as well. The massive rivalry between Benazir as well as Nawaz Sharif facilitated the way for the President to play the role of Viceroy. Hence, it was Benazir's arrogance behavior, miscalculation and obsessive political rivalry to control the province of Punjab; swept her from Premiership in just twenty months.[50]

Benazir Bhutto's Response towards Foreign Policy

Benazir Bhutto's response to foreign policy was proactive and she prioritized regional challenges and smooth relations with neighboring countries. Her response towards Pakistan- India relations was peaceful in approach, patriotic in outlook and visionary as a Prime Minister; to promote regional peace and to steer the poor public towards prosperity. Moreover, she contributed with her efforts to internationalize the Kashmir issue and showed grave concerns on the human rights situation in Kashmir. As far as Pak-US relations were concerned, Benazir Bhutto tried to develop cordial bilateral relations. She concentrated to resolve the F-16 issue and made efforts for returning money or to bring F-16 fighter aircraft in Pakistan. She convinced the US authorities, with a more mature response that Pakistan had no intention of nuclear proliferation beyond peaceful purposes. This was strategically both a mature and visionary response to this important issue. Additionally, Benazir Bhutto aimed at convincing the US authorities that Kashmir should be regarded as disputed territory and plebiscite should be held, according to UN resolution, to determine the fate of Kashmiri people.[51]

CONCLUSION

Benazir Bhutto faced multidimensional challenges including socio-economic, political, national and international conspiracies which destabilised her administratively and politically. She specifically encountered challenges like poor economy, volatile geo-political situation and interference of other institutions in the administrative and political decisions of her governments. Besides this, regional disparities within the state of Pakistan, revengeful politics of opposition and existence of imbalance of power structure between President and Prime Minister shortened her period as a Prime Minister (1988-90). Her party's victory in 1988 elections raised eyebrows of military leadership because PPP was considered as an anti-army political party. Thus, despite her initial bargaining chip with the military, she was unable to develop the understanding with military on several issues like; replacement of Gen. Hameed Gul, ISI Chief, without consulting the then Army Chief, *Pacca Qilla* incident and using of her authority regarding promotion, posting and retirement of senior Army officers. Besides this, she inherited economic problems from her predecessor, inflation, unemployment, poverty and economic bankruptcy in the country. The vindictive politics of opposition also created many hurdles for her administrative skills and decisions at international fronts, Pakistan was facing many foreign policy challenges as well. She also faced the challenge of Centre Provinces relations with Balochistan, Punjab, Sindh and NWFP (Now KPK). Therefore, Benazir inherited some outstanding issues in the internal and external fronts but some of them were those issues which were specifically created for her. Some issues and challenges were also the outcome of her administrative mishandling or governance. These grave challenges required a systematic, visionary and dedicated response and Benazir Bhutto exhibited determined and exquisite response to various contemporary internal and external challenges that Pakistan was facing. To come into power and to run the administrative machinery of the country, she adopted a pragmatic approach and tried to develop a harmonizing relationship with Gen. Aslam Beg, Army Chief, accepted the military's demands without which it would have been possible to bring a democratic transition in the country's political arena. Therefore, the good-will gestures and pragmatic approach of Benazir Bhutto dispelled the concerns of military leadership about Benazir Bhutto and PPP as they had perceived them to be holding an anti-army stance and security concerns. She also assured the army that she will not cut the defense budget. Besides this, her compassionate response and morale boosting visit to Siachen glacier contributed to her positive image as a Prime Minister in the eyes of the Army. Benazir contributed to uplift the economy of the country and disagreed with the policy of nationalization. She prioritized education, rural development and power generation. She established the Board of Investment, Placement Bureau and initiated the People's Work Program to facilitate the general public. She also focused on ameliorating the plight of women in Pakistan and established the first Women Bank. She allocated budget for the gender equality and uplifting of women living in rural areas of Pakistan. She introduced economic growth policies, attracted foreign investment and introduced a public sector service program. Her foreign policy was based on a more progressive approach towards regional challenges and smooth relations with neighboring countries. Despite her best efforts, she could not complete her term because of multiple factors which have already been

highlighted in the above-mentioned pages. Regardless of nepotism and corruption, the most important cause for her short tenure was the bad civil-military relations.

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